

# Los Gatos Objective Design Standards

Subcommittee Meeting

July 19, 2021



# BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

1. Introductions
2. Purpose of Objective Design Standards
3. Town Framework
4. Background Documents
5. Design and Development Goals and Objectives
6. Implementation

# M-GROUP PROJECT TEAM



**Tom Ford**  
Principal  
Project Manager

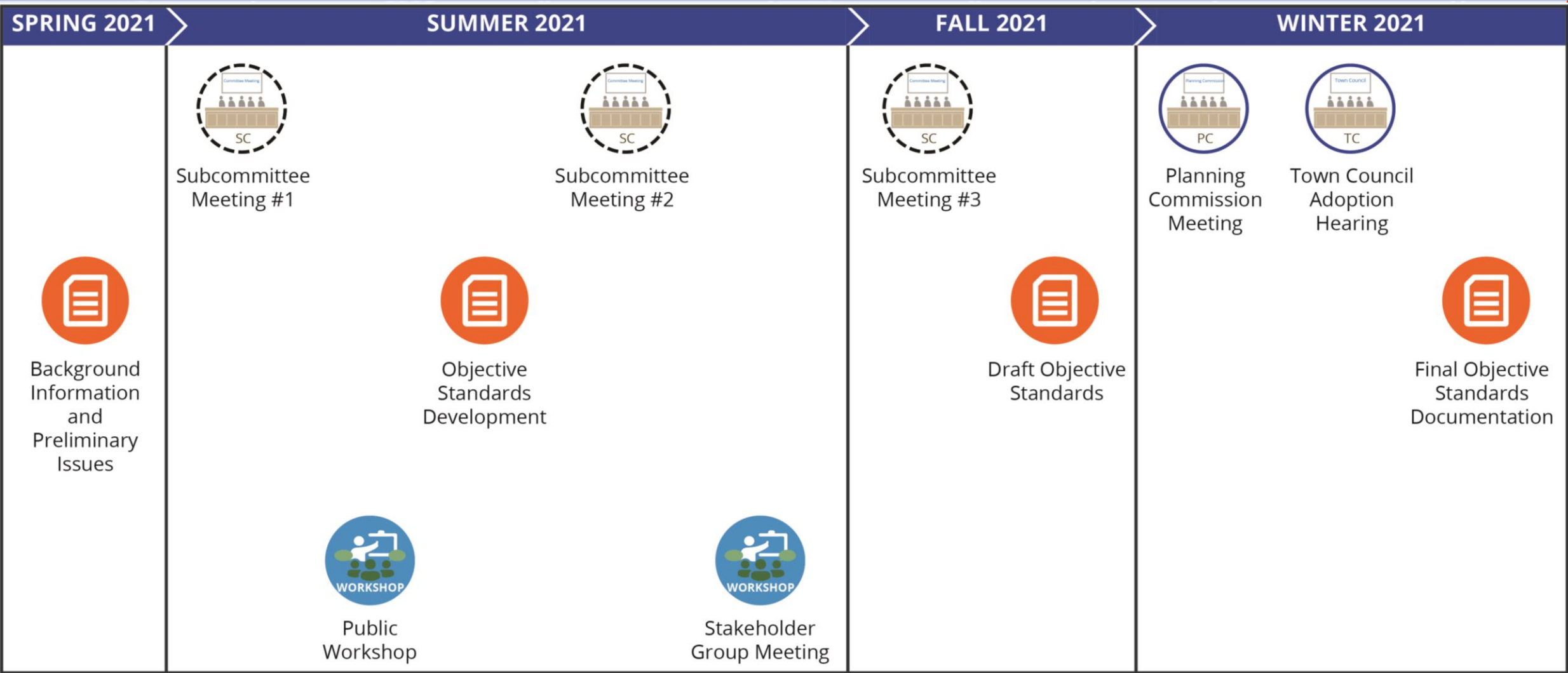


**Damiere Powell**  
Senior Urban Designer



**Erin Tou**  
Associate Planner

# PROJECT SCHEDULE







## PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

# PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

- Establish streamlined and ministerial review process to:
  - Comply with California State legislation
  - Achieve intent of Town planning documents and preserve community character
  - Provide objective criteria
  - Provide certainty to developers
  - Meet demand for multifamily housing

## **SB 167 Housing Accountability Act**

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Local government may not deny, reduce density, or make infeasible housing projects *consistent with objective design standards*

## **SB 35**

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Requires approval of qualified housing projects based on *objective regulatory standards*

## **SB 330 Housing Crisis Act**

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Prohibits imposing or enforcing new design standards established on or after January 1, 2020, that *are not objective*



# WHAT ARE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS?

“standards that involve **no personal or subjective judgement** by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official prior to submittal.”

(California Government Code, Section 65913.4)



# DESIGN GUIDELINES vs OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

## Design Guidelines

- Subjective
- Recommendations (not enforceable)
- Unmeasurable and difficult to interpret

## Objective Standards

- Supplement Design Guidelines
- Streamlined Review
- Measurable, quantifiable, easily defined, and enforceable

# DESIGN GUIDELINES vs OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

## Design Guidelines

"Minimize the visual mass and bulk of the structures."

*AHOZ Design Guidelines.*

*Multiplex Design Objectives*

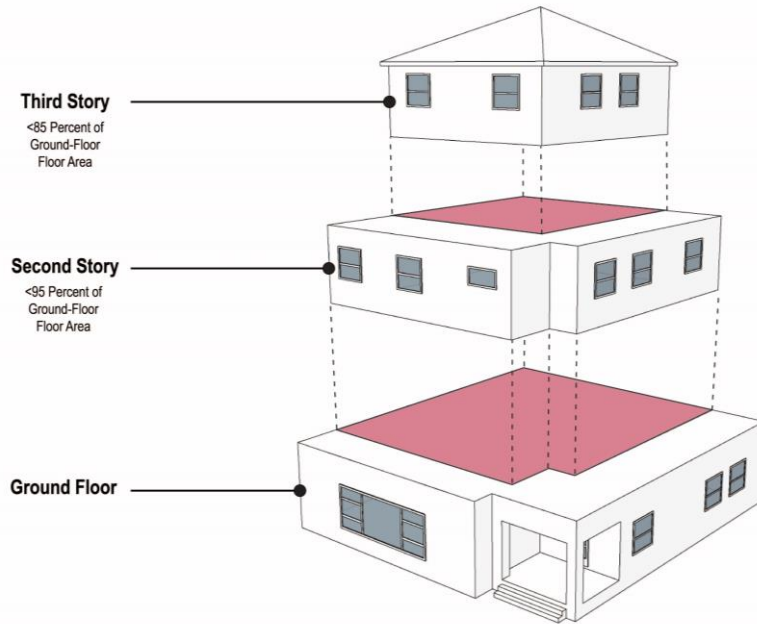
## Objective Standards

"Provide a mix of one- and two-story masses or set the second floor back from the first-floor walls by a minimum of 5 feet for at least 50 percent of the façade of the structure."

*AHOZ Design Guidelines.*

*Multiplex Design Standards*

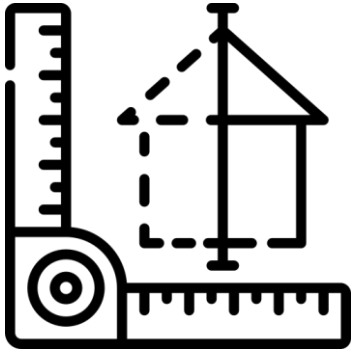
# CITY OF LAFAYETTE OBJECTIVE STANDARD EXAMPLE



- The building bulk for upper levels shall be controlled as follows:
  - The second story shall have a maximum floor area no greater than 95 percent of the ground-floor floor area. The floor area reduction shall be applied to the street-facing façade. For corner lots, the floor area reduction shall be divided between and applied to both street-facing facades.
  - The third story shall have a maximum floor area no greater than 85 percent of the ground-floor floor area. The floor area reduction shall be applied to the street-facing façade. For corner lots, the floor area reduction shall be divided between and applied to both street-facing facades.

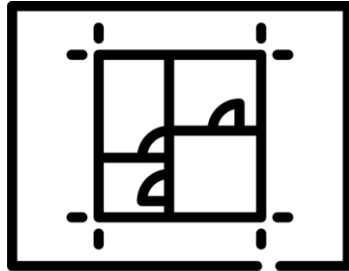


# TOOLS FOR OBJECTIVE STANDARDS



## Counts and Measurements

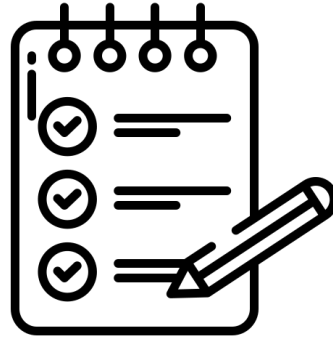
- Height
- Distances
- Setbacks



**1:100**

## Ratios

- Roof Pitch
- Step Back Ratio



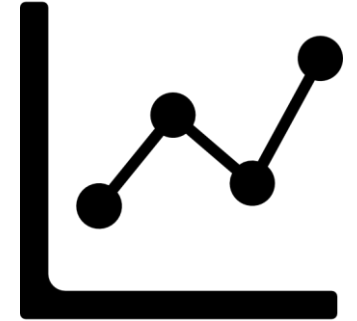
## Checklists

*Checklist of required architectural features*



## Scorecards

*Minimum total of combined scores for eligible design treatment*



## Performance Measures and Benchmarks

*Minimum amount of open space provided*





## TOWN FRAMEWORK



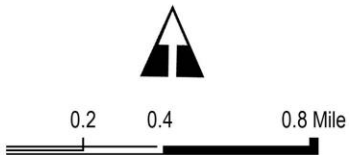
# ZONING - RESIDENTIAL USES PERMITTED BY RIGHT

## Zoning Districts Residential Permitted By Right

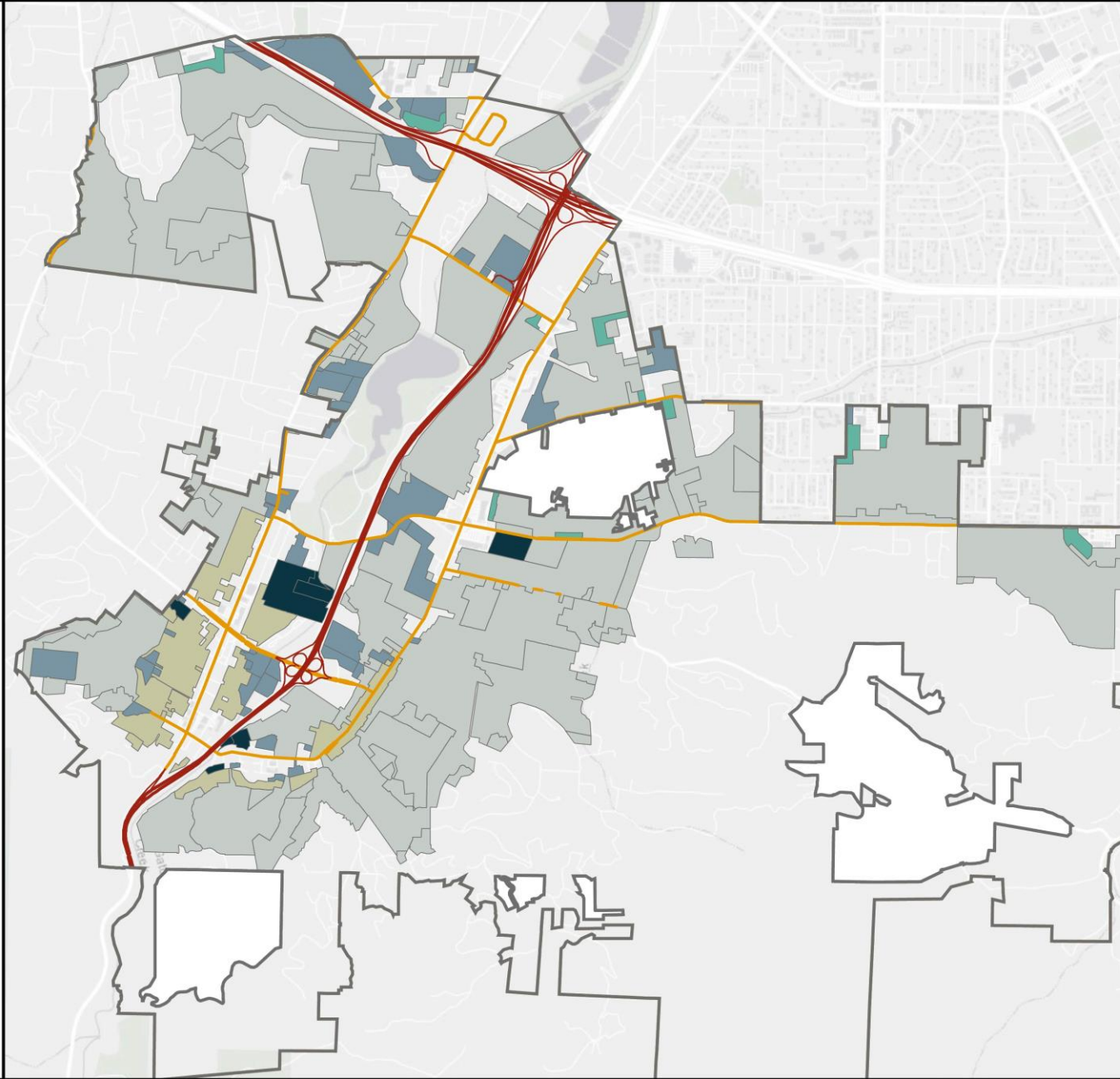
- R1 - Single Family Residential
- R1D - Single Family Residential Downtown
- RD - Residential Duplex
- RM: 5-12 Multi-Family Residential
- RM: 12-20 Multi-Family Residential

### Street Hierarchy

- Freeway
- Arterial



Objective Design Standards  
Town of Los Gatos  
June 3, 2021



- Concentration of multi-family residential zoning along arterial streets
- Objective standards may be applied specifically to multi-family residential zoning districts
- Objective standards may require development to be oriented along arterial streets



# ZONING - RESIDENTIAL PERMITTED CONDITIONALLY

## Zoning Districts - Residential Permitted Conditionally

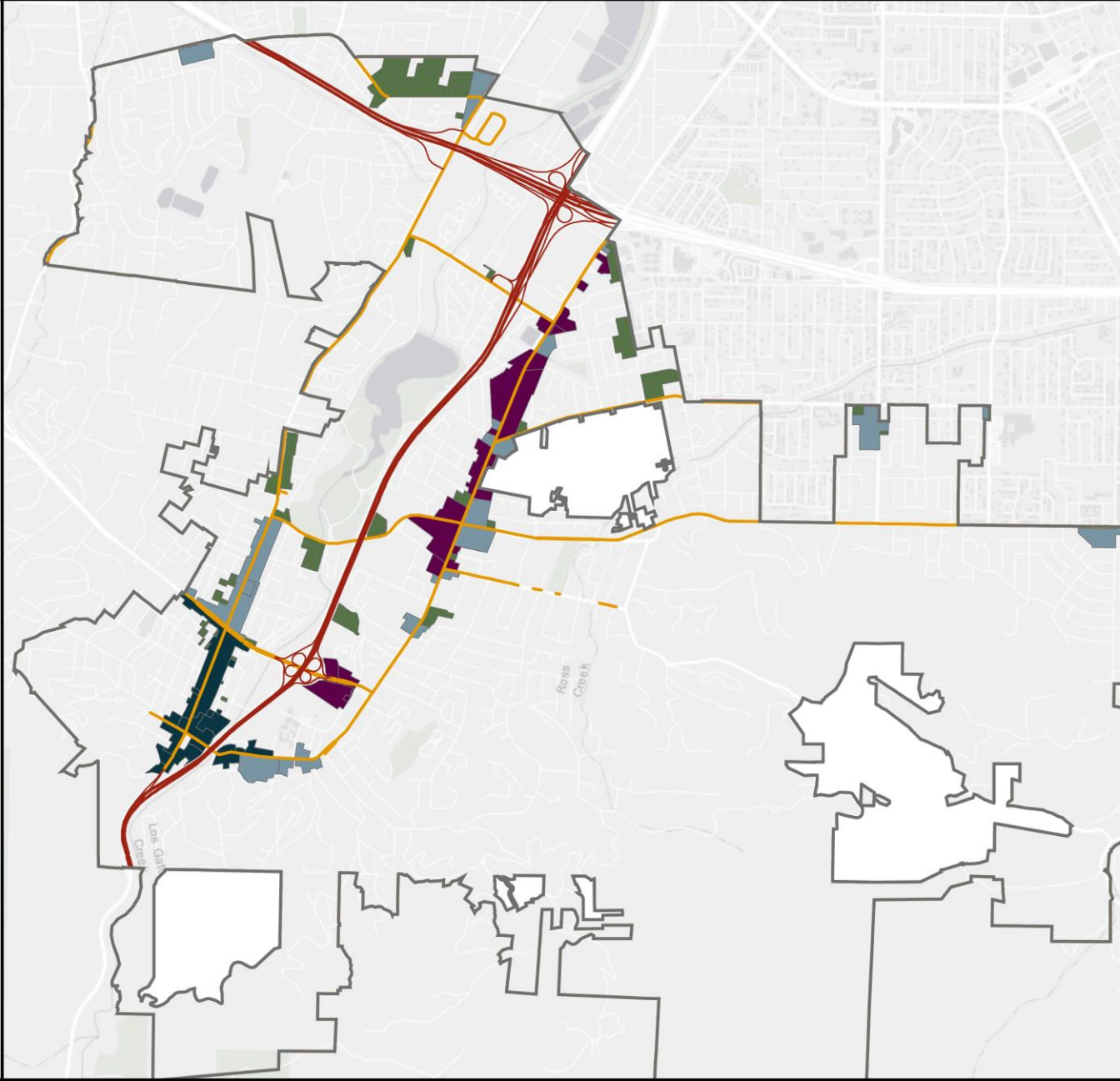
- C1 - Neighborhood Commercial
- C2 - Central Business District
- CH - Restricted Commercial Highway
- O - Office

### Street Hierarchy

- Freeway
- Arterial



Objective Design Standards  
Town of Los Gatos  
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- Multi-family may be permitted conditionally in commercial and office districts
- Objective standards may be applied to multi-family with a mixed-use component in commercial or office districts for streamlined approval





# RESIDENTIAL ZONING AND COMMUNITY PLACE DISTRICTS

## Zoning Districts Residential Permitted By Right

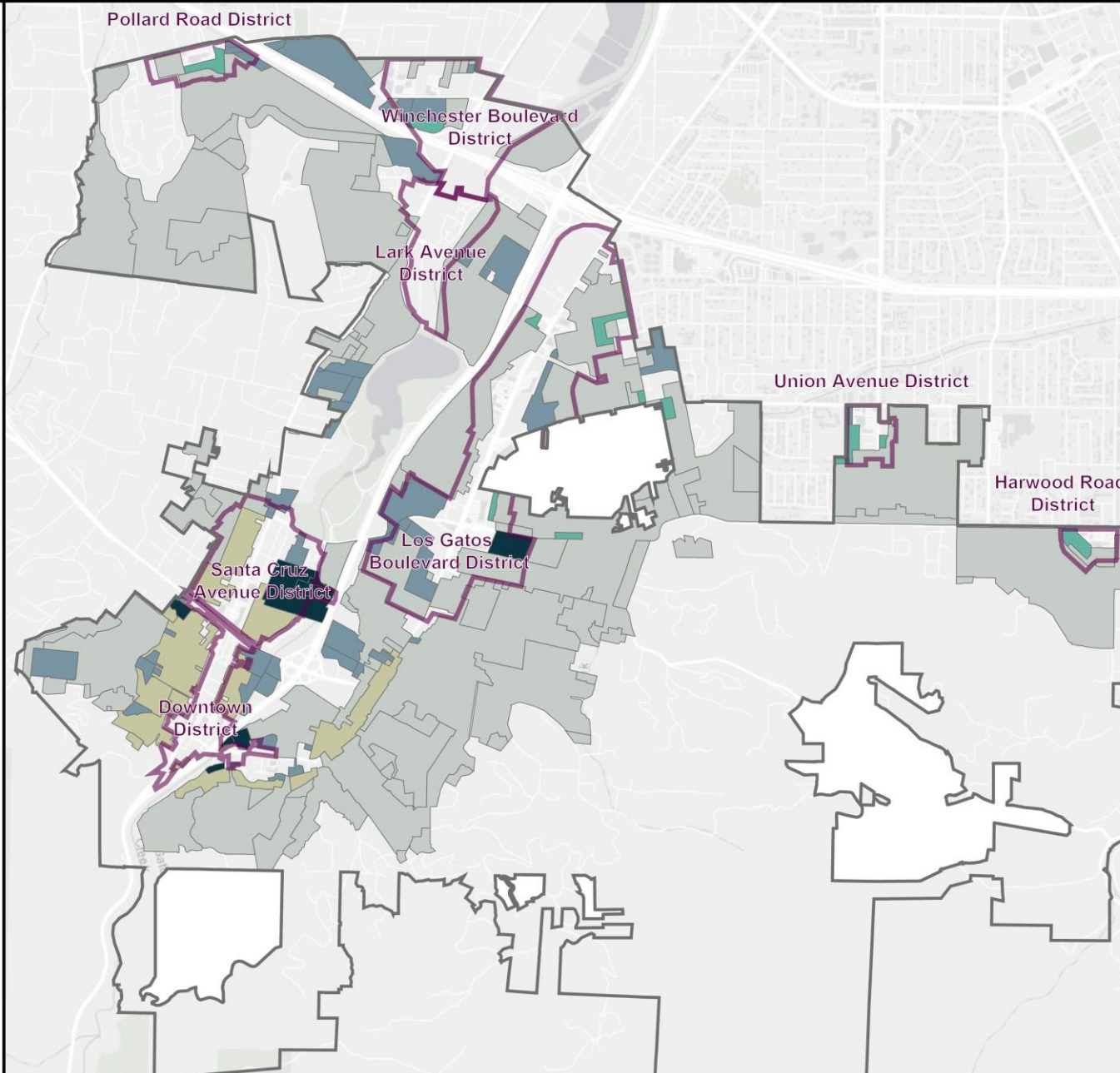
- R1 - Single Family Residential
- R1D - Single Family Residential Downtown
- RD - Residential Duplex
- RM: 5-12 Multi-Family Residential
- RM: 12-20 Multi-Family Residential
- Community Place Districts

### Street Hierarchy

- Freeway
- Arterial



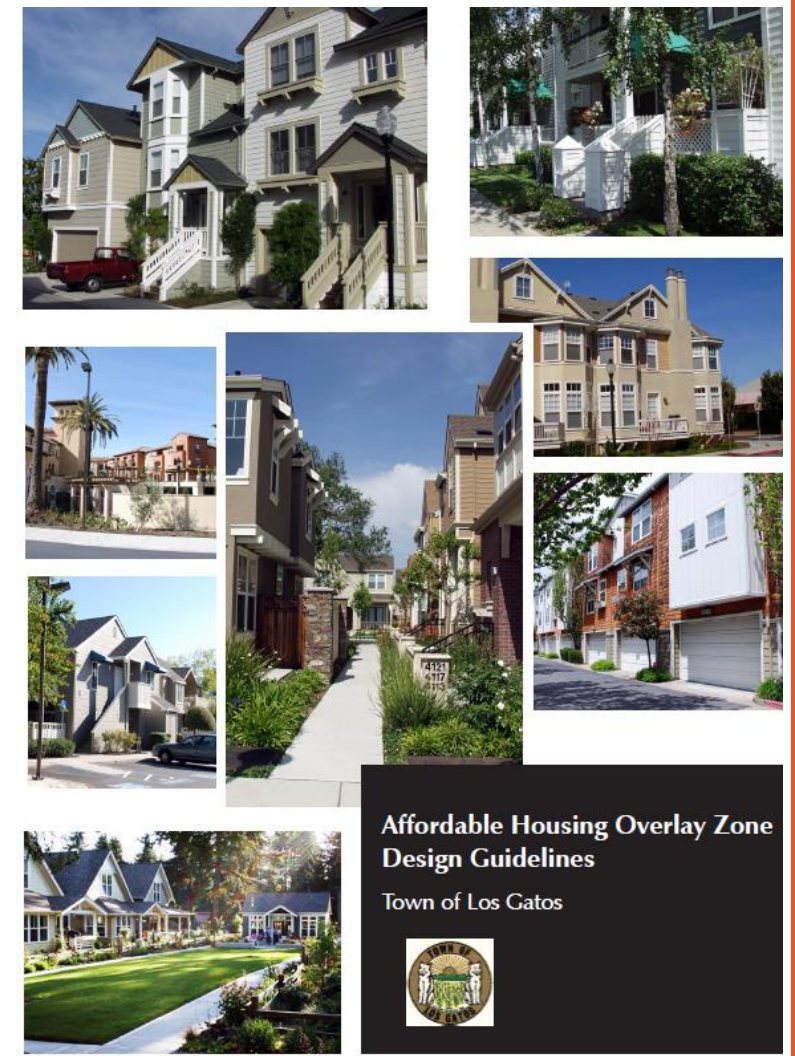
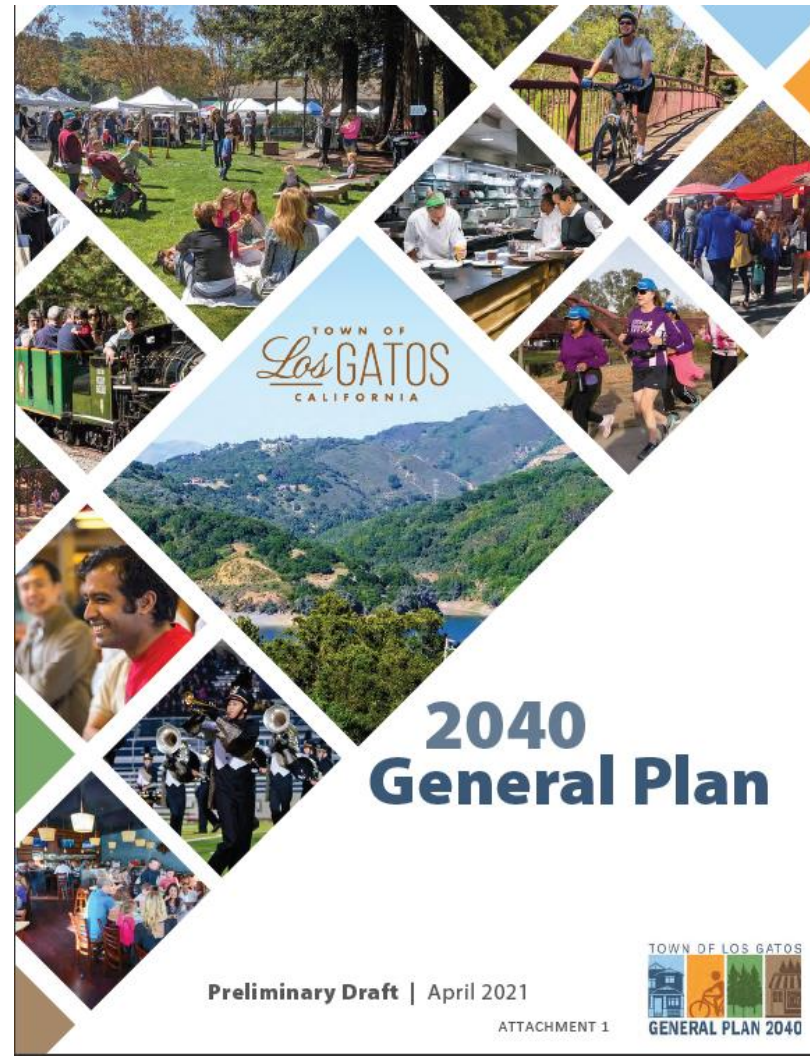
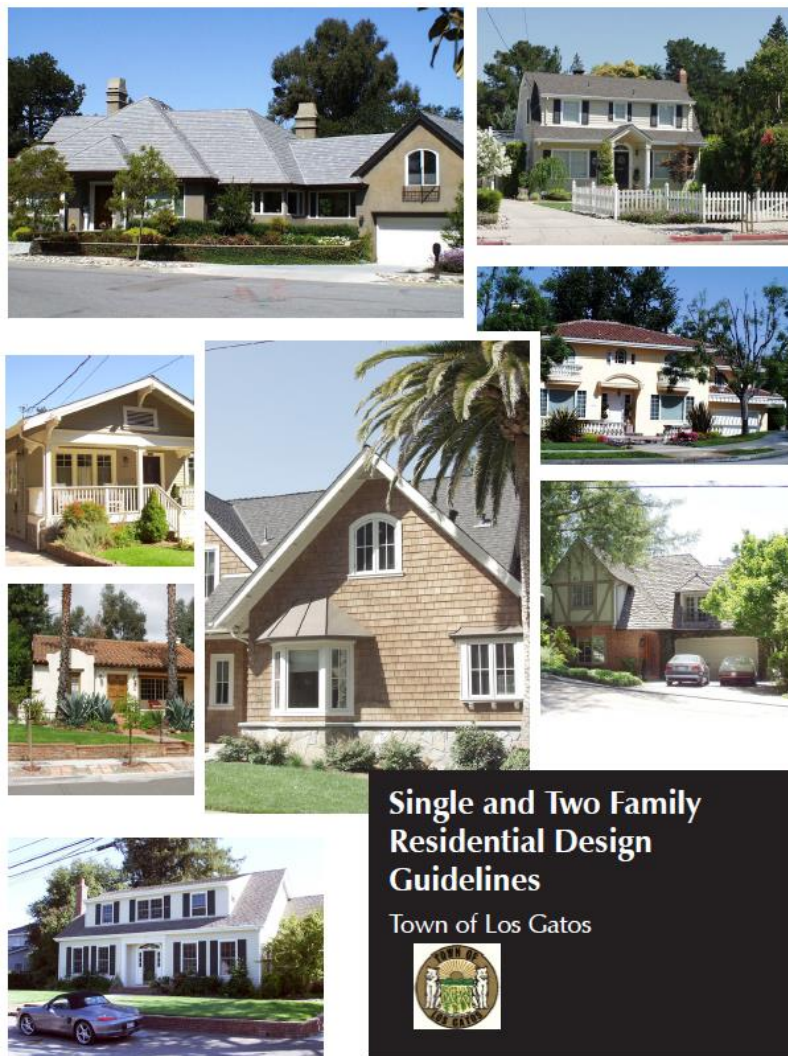
Objective Design Standards  
Town of Los Gatos  
June 3, 2021



- Community Place Districts help contextualize development around town
- Large amount of multi-family residential zoning in and around Community Place Districts
- Community Place Districts may require supplementary objective standards to zoning district standards to match the character of the district







# BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS



# EXISTING TOWN PLANNING DOCUMENTS

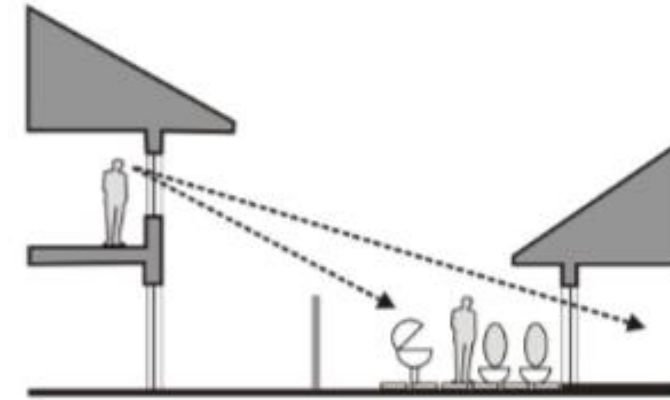
- Zoning Code
- Community Design and Land Use Elements from Draft GPU 2040
- AHOZ Design Guidelines
- North 40 Specific Plan



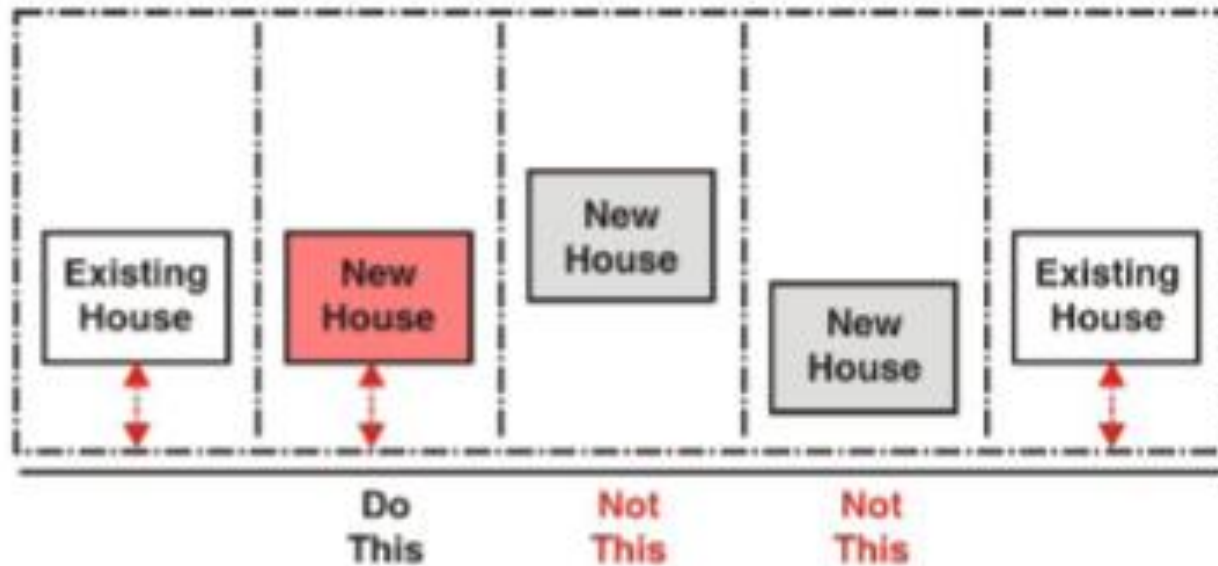
*Diagrams and map from existing town documents that illustrate design goals and objectives*

# EXISTING TOWN PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 2015-2023 Housing Element
- Existing General Plan
- Residential Design Guidelines
- Commercial Design Guidelines



*Avoid placing windows in locations that would look into adjacent neighbors' windows or active private yard spaces*



*Avoid large gable dormers that dominate the roof*

*Diagrams from existing town documents that illustrate design goals and objectives*

# KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM TOWN DOCUMENTS

- Design guidelines, objectives, and standards organized into fundamental categories
- Planning areas with area-specific design goals
  - Community Place Districts
  - AHOZ
  - North 40 Specific Plan
  - Zoning Districts
  - Los Gatos Boulevard
  - Los Gatos Creek

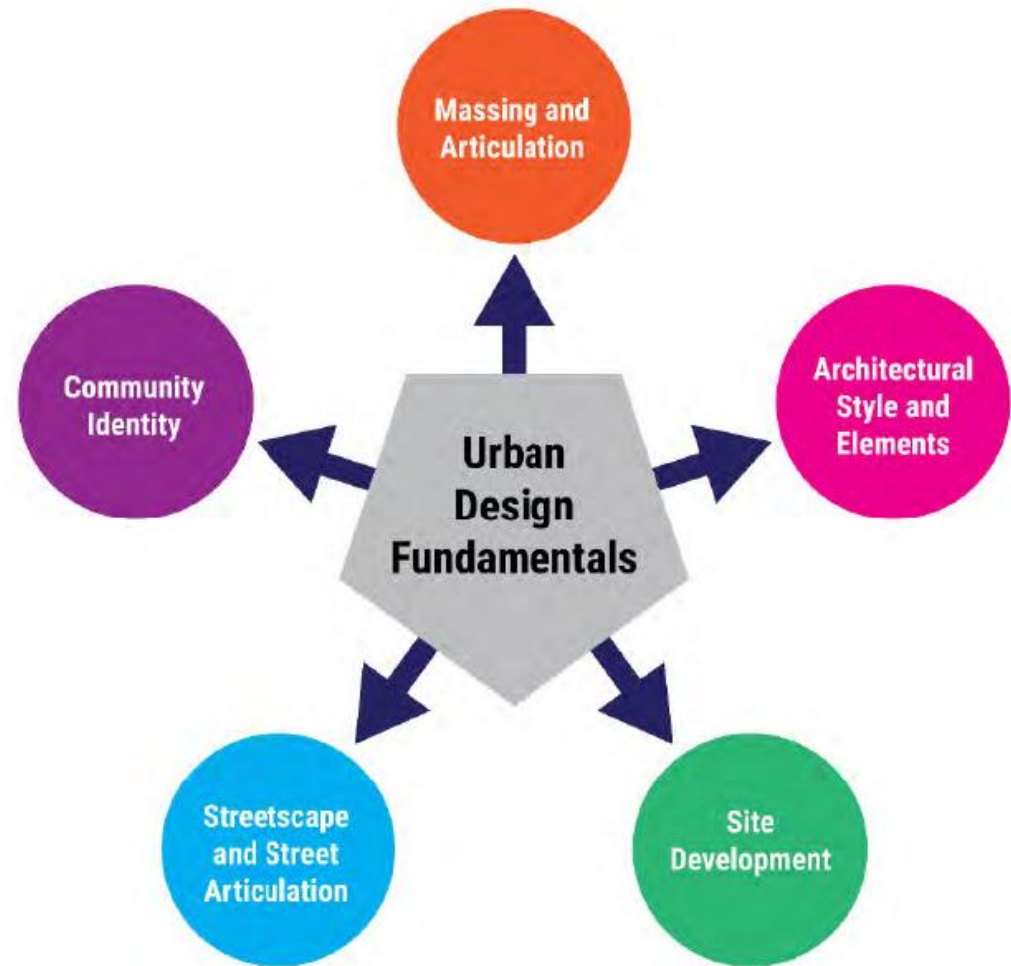


Figure 4-1 Urban Design Fundamental Categories  
Draft 2040 General Plan. Community Design Element





## DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



# DESIGN GOALS TO ADDRESS WITH OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

- What design controls should be incorporated?
  - Building Design
  - Site Design
- How should they be applied?
  - All multifamily development
  - By zoning district
  - Planning areas (i.e. Community Place Districts, Zoning Districts, Specific Plan Areas)
  - Along specific streets or natural features (i.e. Los Gatos Creek, Los Gatos Boulevard, Los Gatos Creek Trail)
- What ODS implementation methods should be used?
  - i.e. measurements, checklists, etc.

# DEVELOPMENT ATTRIBUTES FOR OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Building Design	Site Design
Building Height	Building Placement
Massing and Scale	Parking Location and Design
Façade Design and Articulation	Landscaping and Screening
Roof Form	Pedestrian and Vehicular Access
Materials and Color	Open Space
	Signage
	Utilities

# ASSESSING DEVELOPMENT ATTRIBUTES

Development Attribute	Guideline, Standard, or Goal	Potential Solutions or Improvements
Building Placement	"Buildings should be placed close to, and oriented toward, the street."	Buildings shall be placed within a specified distance from the street based on the average existing setbacks. Buildings shall be oriented towards the street with entrances and a minimum fenestration requirement along street-facing facades.
Massing and Scale	"Require multi-story buildings to incorporate step backs on upper floors to create a more human-scale and comfortable pedestrian environment."	Buildings shall step back the portion of the building above 3 stories by a minimum 8 feet.
Façade Design and Articulation	"Enhance views and make spaces feel larger by maximizing the number of windows."	Building facades shall be fenestrated for a minimum 50 percent of the total façade area.
Pedestrian and Vehicular Access	Encourage development that is adjacent to the Los Gatos Creek Trail to provide secondary access to the trail.	All development adjacent to the Los Gatos Creek Trail shall provide secondary access to the trail.
Landscaping and Screening	"Maintain a high-quality streetscape appearance."	Streetscape landscaping shall be incorporated with a minimum 15-foot area measured from front and side street property lines. This area shall be landscaped with ground cover vegetation, shrubs planted at a rate of 6 per 100 linear feet of the property line, and canopy trees planted at a rate of 4 per 100 linear feet.
Open Space	"Encourage the layout of streets, blocks, and pedestrian corridors in new development to provide views of hillsides."	Map/designate view corridors and identify where new development cannot be built or cannot be built over a certain height.
Parking	"Place parking lots at rear or non-street side of the site to allow a majority of dwelling units to front on the street."	Surface parking lots shall be prohibited in front and side street setback areas.



# IMPLEMENTING OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

- Compile Objective Standards in standalone document
- Organize by Zoning District
- Reference Objective Standards in Zoning Code chapters
- Reference development standards that currently exist in Zoning Code





## SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION

# DEVELOPMENT ATTRIBUTES FOR OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Building Design	Site Design
Building Height	Building Placement
Massing and Scale	Parking Location and Design
Façade Design and Articulation	Landscaping and Screening
Roof Form	Pedestrian and Vehicular Access
Materials and Color	Open Space
	Signage
	Utilities



# LAND USE

## Land Use

- Open Space
- Hillside Residential
- Public
- Agriculture
- Light Industrial
- Office Professional
- Service Commercial
- Albright Specific Plan
- North Forty Specific Plan
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Mixed Use Commercial
- Central Business District
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential



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- Medium to high density residential and mixed-use land uses located in and around Community Place Districts
- Mixed use development adjacent to multi-family
- Objective standards may be applied to multi-family with a mixed-use component



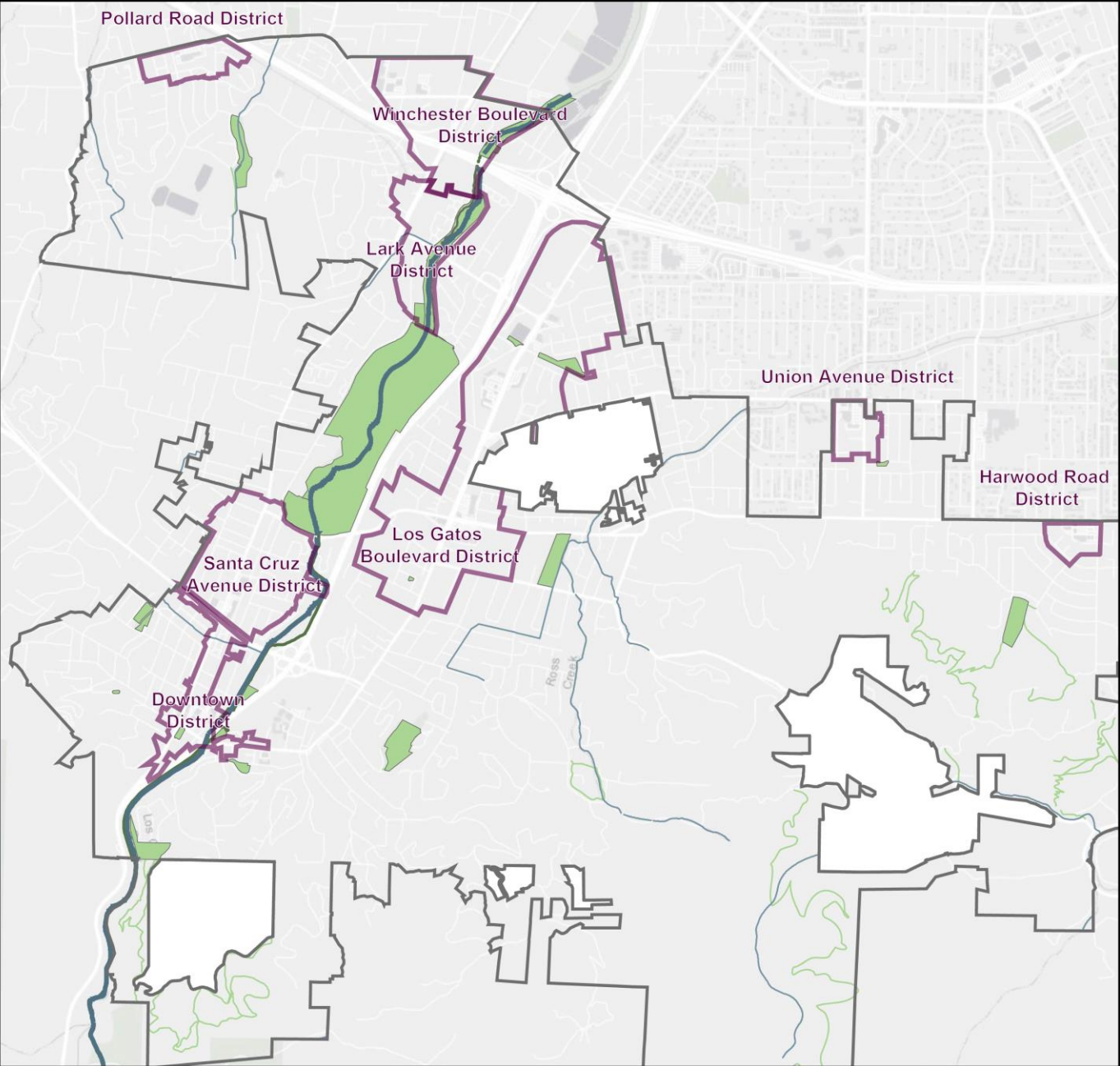
# PARKS AND NATURAL FEATURES

## Parks and Natural Features

-  Parks
-  Community Place Districts
-  Creeks
-  Trail Access Points



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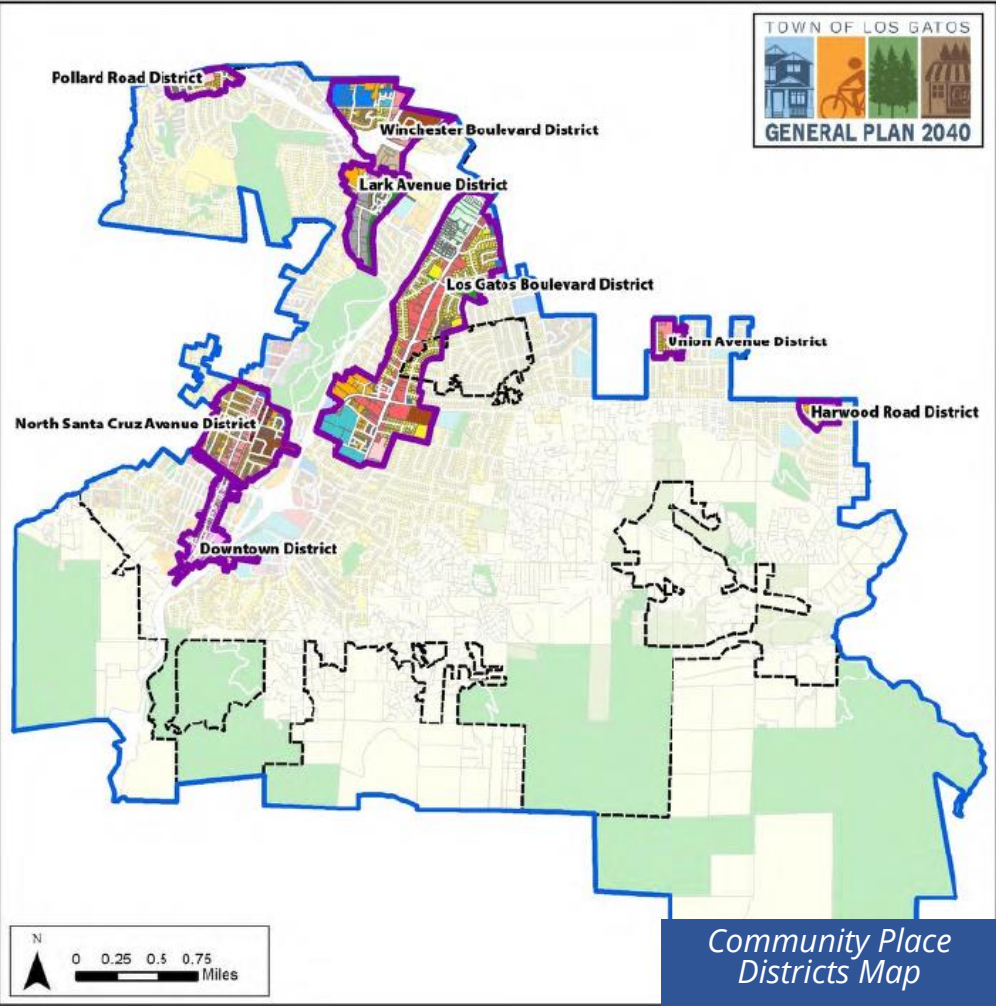


- Parks, trails, and creeks serve as open space amenities
- Multi-family development adjacent to parks, trails, and creeks may have access and orientation requirements to these amenities in objective standards





# COMMUNITY PLACE DISTRICTS



*Community place districts identified in Community Design Element of Draft 2040 General Plan Update*

